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It's your child's care.



Ontario

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE LICENSING OF THIS CHILD CARE CENTRE.



In Ontario, all child care centres must be licensed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, under provincial legislation called the *Day Nurseries Act*.

The Act sets out very specific rules, regulations and minimum standards under which centres must operate in order to get and maintain a licence.

Licenses are renewed through an annual inspection by a representative of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and, depending on the results of that inspection, a child care centre is issued a regular licence or a provisional licence.

When last inspected, this child care centre met all the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act and has been issued a licence.

You can tell whether a centre has a licence or provisional licence simply by looking at it. The licence of a child care centre must be displayed where all parents and visitors can see it. A provisional licence is indicated by a yellow licence display, while a regular licence is displayed in white. Dates of issue and expiry are shown on the licence.

This brochure has been prepared to help parents understand what the status of this centre's licence means to their children's care.

HOW DOES LICENSING RELATE TO MY CHILD'S CARE?



Your child's care is important to you. It's also important to the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the people who operate child care centres. We all want to make sure that child care centres are happy, healthy, and safe places where children will learn and grow.

One of the ways the ministry ensures that children in Ontario are cared for in a manner that is safe and healthy is by licensing and monitoring all premises where more than five children of different parents are cared for. Whether they are called child care centres, nursery schools, day care centres, or day nurseries, they are subject to the regulations contained in the *Day Nurseries Act*.

Most of the regulations in the Act are designed to ensure the health and safety of children. For example, there are regulations that set minimum standards regarding the physical environment of centres, fire and safety procedures, hygiene and cleanliness practices, nutritious meal planning, and policies dealing with child illness.

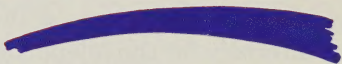
In addition, some regulations relate to helping children develop and learn. These are based on research into child development and are expressed in regulations such as those pertaining to staff-child ratios; staff qualifications and training; and planning for outdoor and indoor play. Another example of a regulation that relates to positive child development is the one which forbids staff in child care centres to treat children in a way that is demeaning or that

undermines a child's self-confidence.

Parents who are interested can purchase a copy of the *Day Nurseries Act* through Publications Ontario. Check the blue pages of the telephone directory for the address and phone number or ask to see your operator's copy of the Act.

It's important to be aware, however, that a licence is not a guarantee of high quality. For the most part, licensing only ensures the fulfillment of minimum standards. It is not unusual for centres to provide care that exceeds the requirements of the Act. As a parent, you will want to be sure that your child's centre embraces policies and practices that fulfill your own expectations of quality.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

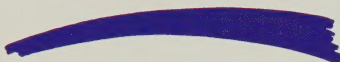


The care of children in Ontario is a shared responsibility. While ministry representatives know a lot about children and child care and may visit each child care centre more than once a year, parents also have an essential role in monitoring the quality of child care.

Your child is a good source of information. Ask about his or her day in the centre. Another way to learn how your child is being cared for is to go into the centre during its operating hours and see for yourself. Although all centres are inspected at least once a year, the situation may change between ministry visits. As a parent, you have the opportunity to visit the centre regularly and to observe when shortfalls in service might occur or how care might be improved.

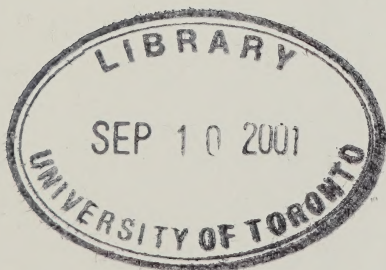
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WANT MORE CHILD CARE INFORMATION?



Please select from the topics below and mail this card.

- ☐ CHILD CARE OPTIONS:
Child Care Centres
- ☐ CHILD CARE OPTIONS:
Home Child Care
- ☐ CHILD CARE OPTIONS:
School-aged Care
- ☐ RECOGNIZING QUALITY IN CHILD CARE
- ☐ PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS WORKING TOGETHER
- ☐ INTRODUCING YOUR CHILD TO CHILD CARE
- ☐ OTHER: _____



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

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A good quality child care centre will welcome parents who wish to visit, willingly answer all questions, and encourage parents to become involved. Ask questions about the way your child is cared for and the way his or her centre is managed. Ask to see a copy of the centre's program statement, which will explain the goals of the centre and how these goals are achieved in the day-to-day activities. As a parent, you have a right to expect the highest quality care possible for your children.

If you have concerns, you should point them out to the operator or staff of the centre. You can expect them to do whatever they can to answer or resolve any issue you may raise. However, if the situation is not improved, you can share your concerns with the ministry. Check the blue pages of the telephone directory for the telephone number of the closest Ministry of Community and Social Services area or district office.

It's important to point out that while the Ministry of Community and Social Services inspects and licenses child care centres in Ontario, it has no authority over matters such as fees, hours of operation, and enrolment procedures. If you have concerns in any of these areas,


they must be directed to the operator of the centre.

You can help centre staff care for your child on a daily basis by keeping them informed of any special problems or concerns you have about your child. For example, that he had a poor night's sleep last night, or she seems to be getting a cold, or is upset because a pet is lost.

The centre will also appreciate your co-operation in following the procedures of the centre - picking up your child on time, making alternate arrangements if your child is ill, and responding to any staff requests such as providing clothing appropriate for different weather and activities.

In such ways parents support the relationship between caregiver and child, enhancing the quality of care for their children.

A NOTE ABOUT CHILD CARE COSTS



Did you know that you may qualify for help that will make child care more affordable for you? Ask the centre's operator for the name of the government agency you can contact for more information about child care subsidies.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

If you would like more information about child care, fill out your name and address, indicate the information you would like to receive, and send it to the address listed on the tear-off.



Complete both sides of this form and mail to:
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Client Information and Support Services
77 Wellesley Street West, M1-56 Macdonald Block
Toronto ON M7A 1E9

Please send the material indicated on the other side to the following address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____



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